



## **MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

**Held Tuesday, July 27, 1999**

**For the purpose of receiving a briefing on historic district proposal.**

The meeting began at 8:25 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull, Edward V.J. Putens, Thomas X. White and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, City Clerk and Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Gail Rothrock, Howard Berger and Jill Yutan, Maryland National Park & Planning Commission; Jack Downs, Sheldon Goldberg, Clara Kuehn, Keith Yahoda, Bill Phelan, Betty Allen, Sylvia Lewis, Ed Griffith, Pearl Seigel, Betty Deitch, Sue Reedy, Sue Krofchik, Bonnie Brant, Wendy Turnbull, Julia Eichorst, Hopi Auerbach and Karl Hille, Greenbelt Gazette

Mr. Berger began by outlining the history of the historic district process. He noted that Greenbelt Homes Inc. (GHI) had weighed in and now the city needed to determine where the process goes from here.

Mayor Davis noted that the City sought GHI's input first because it was the largest property owner and their support was critical before moving forward. She thanked the GHI community for their effort.

Mr. White asked about boundaries and if they were malleable. Mr. Berger responded that the boundaries were the same as the 1980 designation for the National Register of Historic Places.

Ms. Yutan provided a brief review of the Guidelines document. She noted that a more detailed review of the document would occur later in the process. Mr. White asked about how the draft becomes a final copy. Mr. Berger responded that there are technical corrections that need to be made. He also noted that the document was designed to be flexible.

The discussion focused on non-conforming buildings (buildings which were built later than the original community). Mr. Berger stressed that design guidelines tried to get compatible uses.

Mr. Roberts asked about how the facade easement on Roosevelt Center would relate to the Historic District. Mr. Berger responded that it depended on how the easement was written.

Mr. White asked who would own (and control) the design guidelines. Ms. Rothrock responded that ultimately the District Council would approve the final document. She outlined the design review process if the designation actually occurs.

Mayor Davis asked if non-contributing buildings would still have to go through the review process. Mr. Berger responded yes. In response to questions from Council, Mr. Berger indicated that the boundaries were carefully drawn and it would not be good to allow individual owners to opt out of the district.

Mr. Turnbull asked about the relationship between the Historic Preservation Commission and the Board of Education. Mr. Berger indicated the relationship was better and that the Board of Education would be required to get approval from the Commission for any project within a historic district. Mr. Turnbull also asked about city landscaping areas. Mr. Berger responded that simple planting changes would not require approval, but construction of a new island where one did not previously exist would.

Ms. Kuehn asked about use of the word “should” in parkland preservation. Mr. Berger responded that words like “should” and “shall” had specific meanings and were consciously chosen.

Ms. Craze asked about public utilities and structures like cell towers. Ms. Rothrock indicated that the Commission tries to work with the utilities but does not have authority over them.

Ms. Brant asked about additional protections being afforded to a historic district. Mr. Berger and Ms. Rothrock stated their belief that this would provide an added level of protection.

Mr. Goldberg asked about adjacent communities. Mr. Berger responded that the ordinance does not mention or affect adjacent properties.

Mayor Davis asked about the next step and Council asked if formal action was needed. Mr. McLaughlin responded that staff plan to follow the outline previously approved by Council. Mr. Berger indicated the County would like to know whether or not the City planned to move forward. Mr. Moran agreed to investigate Council’s actions to date.

The meeting ended at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Moran, CMC  
City Clerk